**Striving Readers Press Release:**

http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/180-million-awarded-six-states-comprehensive-literacy-program-aimed-children-bir

**Pennsylvania Specific Information:**

**PR/Award #: S371C0044  
Award Amount: $40,000,000  
Grantee: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Education (PA)  
Contact: Jo Beth McKee  
Phone Number: (717) 525-5981**

Keystones to Opportunity: Pennsylvania’s Vision for Sustainable Growth in Reading Achievement, expects to serve 50,000 students and 5,000 to 6,000 teachers from October, 2011 to September, 2016. The project is designed around three keystones. The first is to improve literacy learning outcomes and dramatically increase reading achievement among students in danger of academic failure birth through grade 12 in Pennsylvania. The second is to create a culture of data-driven decision making by supporting implementation of Bernhardt’s Multiple Measures Data logic model at the state, regional, and local levels. The third is to infuse digital technology and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), providing teachers with examples of how technology tools can provide multiple pathways to express and represent information as well as creative options for developing literacy persistence, stamina, and motivation.Project goals and objectives include:

* Align literacy instruction and state initiatives along the birth to Grade 12 continuum at and provide guidance to sub-grantees in aligning local literacy initiatives.
* Demystify the language and essential elements of effective literacy instruction, and mobilize all literacy stakeholders in support of improved literacy outcomes.
* Provide structures, supports, and tools for school leaders and teachers to use valid and reliable data to guide instructional decision making in language and literacy.
* Create 21st century literacy environments where children can acquire the reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills they need to succeed academically.
* Seed innovation by incentivizing and disseminating research-based literacy strategies that result in exceptional reading growth.

The project will provide innovations such as: LEAs partnering with early childhood education providers to develop a comprehensive and coherent literacy plan that spans birth through grade 12; annual data retreats for administrators and teachers, innovation incentive awards for high-performing subgrantees; confidential summative student data portals; and the use of the Standards Aligned System portal as a “one stop” for literacy support.

Two nationally respected organizations will collaborate on the Keystones to Opportunity project evaluation: The Collaborative for Evaluation and Assessment Capacity (CEAC) at the University of Pittsburgh and SAS EVAAS, Inc. for K-12. There are four dimensions to the evaluation plan, based on the Bernhardt’s logic model. Dimensions 1 and 2 are largely quantitative, focusing on demographics and student learning. SAS EVAAS, Inc. will take the lead on these two dimensions. Dimensions 3 and 4 are primarily qualitative and focus on school processes and perceptions. A mixed-method design enhances evaluation efforts and allows for data to be triangulated in order to test the consistency of findings, stimulate future research questions, and provide opportunities to expand upon trends and themes observed in evaluation findings.

**US Department of Ed –information regarding Striving Readers Grant:**

http://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/index.html